

Pastoral Candidate Questionnaire

This questionnaire is a supplement to your resume. If you feel a question is fully covered in your resume, please refer to the resume. Please number responses the same as the question, and please be frank.

1. What are your personal ministry goals?

- To serve in a church that has a heart for reaching out to the community and the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
- To disciple people to become wholly devoted followers of Christ.
- To glorify God with excellence in all things.

2. What are our strengths?

- I have a strong study ethic and a desire to know and understand the Word of God. My primary spiritual gift is teaching.
- I am skilled in working with people and recognize that ministry is about serving people. My experience at Oak Hill was all about being involved in the lives of both members and prospects.
- I also have a strong work ethic. I know that I am working for the greatest employer in the Universe and owe Him my very best at all times.
- Age, training, and experience. The last seven years on staff at Oak Hill have given me on-the-job training that would not be available in seminary.

3. What are your weaknesses?

- I am a perfectionist. That does not mean that I am perfect. It means that I not only have a strong desire to do the right things, but that I am equally as intent on seeing that things are done in the right way. While that may sound like a strength (and in most ways it is), it tends to drive other people crazy at times.
- I am not as strong in administration and finance as I am in ministry. My desire is to be a servant of the Word, not a manager of the work. Nevertheless, my age, training, and life experiences have prepared me for the role of administrator. I have a Masters degree in Educational Leadership and I ran my own business for fourteen years.

4. Please indicate the degree to which the statement of The Baptist Faith and Message, adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on June 14, 2000, reflects your own personal beliefs as an ordained minister of the Gospel.

I agree with the BF&M 2000 in its entirety in both spirit and content.

5. What is your understanding of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

The Bible is the inspired, infallible, inerrant word of God in its entirety from beginning to end. The Bible is consistent in its message. There is one story from beginning to end and that story is the revelation of glory of God ultimately revealed in the life and person of Jesus Christ. He is the main character – not man. The scriptures represent the entire body of revealed knowledge that God felt man needed to exist and, in fact, to thrive in this world.

6. There are various effective leadership styles. How would you describe your own personal style of leadership and how is this evidenced in your ministry?

Mine is not a type-A personality. I am not one who typically jumps into the fray kicking and screaming. I try to identify the challenge, determine through team-work and good counsel the most reasonable and efficient way to solve the issue, then work diligently to reach a goal. I believe that whatever we do, we should do it to the best of our abilities and for the glory of the Father. I want things done with excellence. At times, that has led me to do some things myself that I should have delegated because I want things done right and with quality – not for the sake of pride, but because God is deserving of our very best. I believe that more can be accomplished by working together with a team than with a traditional top-down management style, although I know that ultimately, someone must be in charge.

7. What are several characteristics you desire to see in a church whose call you would feel led of God to accept?

If we lived in a perfect world and I could choose the church that conformed to my understanding of what a church should be, it would be similar in character to the following.

The church...

- ...should have a desire to be led and not to direct. There can only be one shepherd of the flock.
- ...will be willing to stay the same or to make changes, depending on the needs of the community, the ministry, and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. They should have a “whatever it takes” mentality.
- ...would have a group of movers and shakers composed primarily of men, strong in character and integrity with no personal agenda other than discovering and carrying out the will and the work of God.
- ...should have an Acts-type understanding of the purpose of the church – to make disciples of every person possible, both across the street and around the world. That means they should have a missions heart and vision.

8. Please give your understanding of the role of the pastor

The pastor is called by God to be the shepherd and the spiritual leader of the local church. His responsibilities include evangelism and missions, administration, teaching, preaching, pastoral care. But above all, his primary role is the empowering of the membership for ministry. God did not call the pastor to do ministry alone, but to equip others – the church – to do ministry they have been gifted to do.

Eph. 4:11 And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ**, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (NKJV)

This is an awesome task and cannot be done without an absolute dependence on the work of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the pastor must not only be strong in his spiritual life, but he is to develop a strong spiritual understanding in the lives of the people. He does this through strong biblical preaching, sound teaching, building personal relationships. He must be accountable while at the same time teaching the membership that they, too, are to be accountable for the gifts the Holy Spirit has given them.

Every member should be about the work of feeding the hungry, visiting the sick and those in prison, clothing the naked, caring for the outcast, and bearing witness to the gospel of Christ

across the street and around the world. (1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:7) The pastor – the shepherd – is the one who leads them to understand their own calling.

Finally, the pastor is a servant. (Matt. 20:26-27) He must have a passion for his Lord – to serve Him and to encourage others to do the same. He must also have a passion for people. (John 13:14-15; 2 Cor. 4:5) Ultimately, a pastor's vision and mission will be fruitless and futile if he does not have a heart for the lost and a desire to disciple the saved.

- 9. We are aware that the responsibilities of a pastor are many and varied and that many demands fall upon the pastor. We are also aware that a pastor is a human being who is fallible and not equally strong in all areas of ministry. Using a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the area of greatest strength, please indicate your own self-evaluation of the following.**

- 4 1) Preaching ability
- 4 2) Compassionate personality
- 4 3) Good at visiting with people
- 4 4) Shows good care of the sick and hurting
- 5 5) Good about visiting new prospective members of the church
- 5 6) Evangelistic, with passion for the unsaved and unchurched
- 3 7) Good at administering the affairs of the church
- 3 8) Good at public relations with the community at large
- 2 9) Active in the affairs of the local Baptist Association and the denomination

- 10. Explain how you will manage your time as pastor to assure that you meet all of your pastoral obligations.**

A pastor is only a human with no more stamina than a normal human being. He can only do so many things within the span of a week. My work days will be a minimum of eight hours. Most will be much longer. If I am to be effective in presenting the gospel message, I must have time to prepare. If you use the standard of ten hours per sermon, that accounts for 30 hours of the week for three sermons or lessons. With all of the responsibilities of the pastorate, that is probably an impossibility in most cases. A more realistic amount of time would be 18-20 hours per week.

The remainder of the week will be applied to pastoral ministries and administration, although both are tasks that can be shared with other paid staff and/or responsible and accountable volunteers. Just like any other person, a pastor needs "down time" to rejuvenate his energy and his mind. He also must have time to devote to family responsibilities and the obligations of life.

- 11. What are your thoughts concerning the frequency of...**

a) In-home visits to church members

While getting to know the people of the church and community, it will be necessary for the pastor to spend as much time as possible in the homes of members and regular attenders. However, as time goes by, those visits must of necessity be less frequent. Sunday School teachers, deacons, and other church leaders should be responsible for assisting the pastor in ministering to church members and families.

b) Visits to shut-ins

Here is an area that is typically a sensitive area in many churches – especially those in smaller towns and communities. Those who cannot attend church because of age or poor health are as entitled to ministry as anyone else. And the pastor must be involved in this ministry. However, this is not the primary role of the pastor. He is responsible for their spiritual welfare, but the time a pastor personally spends in this ministry reduces the amount of time he has for equipping the body as a whole. This is a ministry of the church that should be developed by those who have a special calling to the task, similar to those called to children's or youth ministry.

c) Visits to hospitalized church members

This is an important ministry of the pastor and his staff as well as that of the membership. The pastor should make as many visits to those in the hospital as possible without restricting his overall responsibility to the church. This is another area of ministry that can utilize people who have the spiritual gift of caring and mercy. Quite often people have complained about not receiving a hospital visit from the pastor. When asked if anyone else from the church had visited, they answered yes. What most people don't understand is that if the foot or the hand or the heart visits the hospital, the head is there, too, because we all are part of the body of Christ.

12. What are your thoughts concerning evangelistic outreach and missions?

The goal of God is to receive glory from His creation. That was His motivation behind the Creation and in the plan of salvation. The Great Commission and Acts 1:8 are the foundational commandments upon which the church is built. We have been given a clear directive to make disciples of every people group – whether they live next door to us or the Himalayas. Both references are imperative statements of how the church is to carry out its mission. We are commanded to go – to live a life that constantly reflects the love of Christ and to share the message of the Gospel with whomever we come into contact. A church that understands the mind of Christ will have a heart for the lost and for missions.

13. What expectations do you feel are appropriate for a church like ours to expect of the family of its pastor?

No more and no less than would be expected out of the members of any family that are members of the church. The pastor is the overseer of the church. His wife is his help meet. Unless she is paid as any other staff member, she should not have any greater expectations put on her than would be asked of any other able-bodied member. The pastor's family should be well-disciplined and actively involved in the ministries for which God has gifted them.

14. What is your own personal practice to help assure that you maintain a close personal relationship with Jesus Christ, experience His guidance and continue your own growth as a Christian and church leader?

I am constantly reading and studying God's word, though I cannot say daily because there are plenty of days I miss. Prayer is a constant state. I take literally the verse that says, "Pray without ceasing." Nevertheless, there are many times that I get alone with God and have some pretty serious heart-to-heart. I know this – there is no way that anyone can minister who does not spend a considerable amount of time in prayer (speaking to God) and in Bible study (listening to God speak).

15. What practices do you follow to help you develop and maintain a wholesome family relationship in your own family?

My wife and I have been married for 33 years. We are closer now than ever before. While we do not have a regularly scheduled time that we pray and study together, we do pray together on large numbers of occasions and we have great conversations about the things that God is

teaching us. This whole pastoring venture has tested our faith and tried our marriage, but with the result that in both cases we have experienced significant personal and spiritual growth.

16. What steps do you take to keep up-to-date on your religious and theological education and to keep abreast of what is going on in our society at large?

I read.

I read *The Christian Index* every issue to keep up with Baptist news. I read lots of books and articles and listen to sermons. Some of the books that I have read in the last five years include...

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*

C. S. Lewis, *The Great Divorce*

Dallas Willard, *The Divine Conspiracy*

Ravi Zacharias, *Can Man Live Without God*

Dallas Willard, *Renovation of the Heart*

Ravi Zacharias, *Jesus Among Other Gods*

Chuck Colson, *How Now Shall We Live*

John MacArthur, *Ashamed of the Gospel*

John MacArthur, *The God Who Loves*

Jim Collins, *Good to Great*

Randy Pope, *The Prevailing Church*

T. Cahill, *How the Irish Saved Civilization*

I am constantly searching the internet for new sources and returning to some favorites for continuing research and spiritual growth. Here are a few of the sites I frequent...

www.bible.org

www.monergism.org

www.preceptaustin.org

It is my desire to complete seminary training. I know that it is important and, as God allows, I will continue to pursue my studies.

17. What is your understanding of the principle of the autonomy of the local church in its relationship to the local Baptist Association, the State Convention and the Baptist Denomination as a whole?

Each church is autonomous within itself as far as its government is concerned. I am very disappointed in the jealousy and separation between churches within the community. If we were serious about reaching the world for Christ, why is it that Baptist churches are so reticent about cooperating with one another? Associations, conventions, and denominations have their place, but they are neither the means nor the ends of the church and its mission. They are resources that should be taken advantage of and deserve the support of individual churches.

18. How do you understand the Baptist principle of the priesthood of all believers and the way that principle operates in a local church?

I confirm the stance of the SBC: "Laypersons have the same right as ordained ministers to communicate with God, interpret Scripture, and minister in Christ's name. This doctrine is first and foremost a matter of responsibility and servanthood, not privilege and license. It is of course, a perversion of this doctrine to say that all views are equally valid, that you can believe anything and still be a Baptist or that the pastor has no unique leadership role."

Every person who comes to Christ does so on an equal footing and on an individual basis. There is no need for an intermediary to reach the Father other than the Son. However, this does not mean that every Christian is autonomous. We are called and commanded to submit ourselves to one another and typically that is done through the local church. We need each other and at times must surrender our own wills so that the ministry will move forward. No individual is more important than the church as a whole.

19. What is your understanding of the functions of the Deacon Body of a Baptist Church?

First of all, the term “Deacon Body” is not scriptural. The church is the body of Christ and is not composed of other bodies that are separate and distinct from the body of Christ. Even a cursory study of scripture will reveal that the deacons of the early church were neither administrators nor managers. Nor did they have a legitimate claim of control over the functions or leadership of the local church. That role is assigned to pastors, bishops, elders, and overseers. Being a deacon is not a position of status but a compelling opportunity for practical servanthood. The position requires submission, not leadership skills.

20. Please express how you feel a pastor and the Deacon body should work together in providing leadership to the church.

The purpose of the pastor is primarily vision-casting and equipping the saints for ministry. The purpose of deacons is to serve tables and to see that widows and orphans are cared for. In other words, their primary role is to care for the people. The role of the pastor is to equip them for that task and to hold them accountable to the task. There is nothing wrong with the deacons serving a dual role of elders who assist in the leadership of the church by participating in various ministry teams, by counseling the pastor about the direction that the church is going, and even holding the pastor accountable for his responsibilities. Thus the two (pastor and deacons) become a team which has the welfare of the membership and the glory of God as its banner.

21. What do you believe is necessary for a local Baptist church in the 21st century to more adequately develop a church life that follows the pattern of the New Testament church?

The commission of the church as given in Acts has not changed. It is still a mission directed toward people, not projects. A church that plans to grow must meet the needs of the people whom they wish to attract. To be attractional, the church must be intentionally relational. Contacts, visits, phone calls, emails, personal touches – all are part of the plan for reaching people. The leadership must work as a team and at the same time hold each other to high standards of accountability to ensure that people are being met at the level of their need.

The church must teach the Truth – the Word of God – Christ crucified, resurrected, ascended, and destined to return. If we would transform our community and our society, we must begin by transforming the hearts of the people – not in legislative and judicial hallways. The responsibility of the church is to share the Gospel. It is the prerogative of God as to who gets saved.

22. How do you feel about the role of women in leadership life of the church?

While the Bible does not specifically restrict women from positions that traditionally require ordination, it specifically refers to the position of bishop, deacon, elder, and other church officials as being held by men. My personal understanding is that only men should be ordained. Nevertheless, I would hate to see the condition of most Baptist churches if women were prevented from holding leadership positions and from expressing significant influence in church affairs.

23. What are your thoughts about the Cooperative Program and the work of Southern Baptists?

I was raised a Southern Baptist and believe in the Cooperative Program. Both are great institutions that have served the mission of Christ well for many, many years. I do, however, think that the church should not limit its outreach efforts and programs to those of the SBC. There are large numbers of fantastic resources and agencies available and the church should utilize as many of them as is practical.

24. What is your view of the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship?

I must confess that I do not have enough knowledge of the CBF to form a distinct opinion. I know that the controversy has been going on now for several years, but I have been too busy doing ministry to take too much time to study the details of the controversy. (Since you asked the question, I have begun to catch up on my reading related to the subject.) From the little I do know, I do not have any desire to join or to support the CBF. I have no reason to since the SBC has done nothing nor taken any stand that I do not support.

In Mark 3:24, Jesus said, "If a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand." (Compare Mark 9:38-40.) I heard about a pastor who was leading a church conference. The discussion centered around whether or not the church should relocate to accommodate growth. Several older heads objected and the discussion became somewhat heated. Finally, the pastor suggested they put a sign in front of the church that said, "World, Go to Hell. We are too busy fighting to care."

I understand that it is important to be doctrinally pure and to teach the whole truth of the Gospel. If we compromise our beliefs and standards we will lose our ability to be an influence in the world for Christ. But fighting among ourselves will achieve the same results. We need to spend our time as servants and as missionaries and as worshippers of the sovereign God. He doesn't need defending. He is sovereign and in complete control of everything in the Universe (Col. 1:17).

25. Please list the top three things you have learned from your experience thus far as a pastor of Baptist Churches.

- 1) Being a pastor is hard work – that being an involved Christian is, in fact, hard work – and cannot be accomplished without much prayer and clear vision.
- 2) The primary purpose of the church is to give God glory and that the reason for evangelism is to bring more people into the realm of the kingdom of heaven for the express purpose of expressing glory to God.
- 3) Two critical keys to success in administrating a church are communication and accountability.

26. What are your views of the Calvinistic Theology?

Theology is the study or knowledge (-logy) of God (*theo*). I believe John Calvin had it right about God. God is the absolute Sovereign of the Universe. He created it and us by the simple expression of His thoughts, and by Him all things consist. He is self-determining. He does not choose to do what is right, but what He chooses to do is right. He is omnipotent, omnipresent, omniscient, immutable, infinite, and eternal. He is purposeful. The fact that there is a Universe with static laws is evidence that there is design and purpose in the Creation.

His purpose for Creation was so that He would receive glory. This Universe is the factory in which He is creating for himself sons – heirs to His kingdom – who will worship Him forever. The process He chose to use included the Fall of man and man's ultimate redemption through Christ Jesus. The plan of salvation is totally His and was determined before the foundation of the world. Those who call Him Father were chosen by Him before the foundation of the world. So that salvation is His responsibility – one hundred percent. We do not seek Him – He seeks us and calls us and saves us by His own volition and by His own absolute sovereignty.

At the same time, God, in His infinite wisdom, knew that the only true worship was that which came from a willingly humbled heart. Love that is forced or coerced is not love. He therefore created man with the capacity to decide. Man chose wrongly – selfishly – and, as a result, inherits the capacity to die – something that is not natural, but is the result of disobedience and judgment. The result is that every man who is approached by the Spirit of God must ultimately decide what he will do with the Lordship of Christ. To reject Him is to choose an

eternity separated from the presence of God and the heavenly hosts. So that salvation is his (man's) responsibility – one hundred percent. Man does not seek God because there is no natural facility within him to prompt him to seek that which is infinite.

While it may seem thus, there is no contradiction in these parallel thoughts. We would love to be able to reconcile these two concepts that seem to be in opposition, but we cannot because we are finite – limited by time, space, and matter. To reconcile these two concepts would require knowledge that God did not see fit to reveal to us. It is a knowledge of eternity that, if we possessed it, would truly make us like God. It is a piece of the puzzle that God chose to keep from us until all is revealed at the last day.

27. If this church were led to call you as pastor and you were led to accept, what would you desire to see happen in this church in the next five years?

I want to be part of a church that puts the worship of God as its priority. Who is willing to do whatever it takes to see that the work of Christ is done – across the street and around the world. To be willing to color outside of the lines and to adapt to new traditions that are biblical in nature and evangelistic in vision. I want to see a family that turns its face outward toward the harvest fields, not only of the local community, but of Europe, Africa, Asia, and to the remotest parts of the world. I would love to see Sunday School teachers who care so much for their people that, even if they can't teach, they can build a class on relationships and love for one another. To see deacons who "deac" – who have such a servant's heart that they are too busy serving to worry about whether someone else is not. To see every born-again Christian involved in a ministry that allows them to utilize their God-given talent and Spirit-inspired gifts. To see a worship program second-to-none that utilizes every resource, both traditional and contemporary, both manual and technological, to lead the people in worship and praise. To see a youth program that teaches children and students that there is no alternative life style acceptable to God other than that outlined by the truth of Scripture.